STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Budget Change Proposal - Cover Sheet
DF-46 (REV 08/17)

Fiscal Year	Business Unit	Department	Priority No.
2018-19	8570	California Department of Food and Agriculture	2

Budget Request Name	Program	Subprogram
8570-402-BCP-2018-MR	6570 –Agricultural Plant and Animal Health; Pest Prevention; Food Safety Services	

Budget Request Description
Nutria Survey and Detection

Budget Request Summary
The California Department of Food and Agriculture requests $400,000 General Fund on a two-year limited-term basis and 1 position beginning in 2018-19 for the survey and detection of nutria (*Myocaster coypus*) in and around California waterways. This survey is necessary to determine the extent of the nutria infestation and to provide that information to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services to assist in its effort to eradicate the incipient infestations.

Requires Legislation	Code Section(s) to be Added/Amended/Repealed
☐ Yes ☒ No	

Does this BCP contain information technology (IT) components? ☐ Yes ☒ No *If yes, departmental Chief Information Officer must sign.*	Department CIO	Date

For IT requests, specify the project number, the most recent project approval document (FSR, SPR, S1BA, S2AA, S3SD, S4PRA), and the approval date.

Project No. Project Approval Document: Approval Date:

If proposal affects another department, does other department concur with proposal? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Attach comments of affected department, signed and dated by the department director or designee.

Prepared By	Date	Reviewed By	Date
Michelle Dennis	4/16/18	Stephen Brown	4/16/18
Department Director	Date	Agency Secretary	Date

Department of Finance Use Only

Additional Review: ☐ Capital Outlay ☐ ITCU ☐ FSCU ☐ OSAE ☐ CALSTARS ☐ Dept. of Technology

PPBA	Date submitted to the Legislature
Original signed by: John Fitzpatrick	

BCP Fiscal Detail Sheet

BCP Title: Nutria Detection and Survey

BR Name: 8570-402-BCP-2018-MR

Budget Request Summary

	FY18					
	CY	BY	BY+1	BY+2	BY+3	BY+4
Personal Services						
Positions - Permanent	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Total Positions	**0.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**
Salaries and Wages						
Earnings - Permanent	0	61	61	0	0	0
Earnings - Temporary Help	0	106	106	0	0	0
Total Salaries and Wages	**$0**	**$167**	**$167**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Total Staff Benefits	0	116	116	0	0	0
Total Personal Services	**$0**	**$283**	**$283**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Operating Expenses and Equipment						
5301 - General Expense	0	10	10	0	0	0
5302 - Printing	0	1	1	0	0	0
5304 - Communications	0	2	2	0	0	0
5308 - Insurance	0	6	6	0	0	0
5320 - Travel: In-State	0	1	1	0	0	0
5324 - Facilities Operation	0	4	4	0	0	0
5346 - Information Technology	0	1	1	0	0	0
5368 - Non-Capital Asset Purchases - Equipment	0	2	2	0	0	0
539X - Other	0	90	90	0	0	0
Total Operating Expenses and Equipment	**$0**	**$117**	**$117**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Total Budget Request	**$0**	**$400**	**$400**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

Fund Summary

Fund Source - State Operations						
0001 - General Fund	0	400	400	0	0	0
Total State Operations Expenditures	**$0**	**$400**	**$400**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Total All Funds	**$0**	**$400**	**$400**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

Program Summary

Program Funding						
6570 - Agricultural Plant and Animal Health;	0	400	400	0	0	0

Pest Prevention; Food Safety Services						
Total All Programs	**$0**	**$400**	**$400**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

BCP Title: Nutria Detection and Survey **BR Name: 8570-402-BCP-2018-MR**

Personal Services Details

Positions	Salary Information Min	Mid	Max	CY	BY	BY+1	BY+2	BY+3	BY+4
0762 - Environmental Scientist (Eff. 07-01-2018)				0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
TH00 - Temporary Help				0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total Positions				**0.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**	**1.0**

Salaries and Wages	CY	BY	BY+1	BY+2	BY+3	BY+4
0762 - Environmental Scientist (Eff. 07-01-2018)	0	61	61	0	0	0
TH00 - Temporary Help	0	106	106	0	0	0
Total Salaries and Wages	**$0**	**$167**	**$167**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Staff Benefits						
5150350 - Health Insurance	0	49	49	0	0	0
5150500 - OASDI	0	13	13	0	0	0
5150600 - Retirement - General	0	47	47	0	0	0
5150800 - Workers' Compensation	0	7	7	0	0	0
Total Staff Benefits	**$0**	**$116**	**$116**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**
Total Personal Services	**$0**	**$283**	**$283**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**

Analysis of Problem

A. Budget Request Summary

The California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) requests $400,000 General Fund (GF) on a two-year limited-term basis and 1 position beginning in 2018-19 to cooperate with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) and the United States Department of Agriculture Wildlife Services (USDA-WS) in surveying and monitoring populations of the invasive field rodent, Nutria. Cooperation in efforts to suppress and prevent the spread of field rodents is authorized under Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) sections 6021-6024. This proposal would establish one Environmental Scientist position, as well as funding for a seasonal crew working under the direction of a multi-agency Incident Command System.

B. Background/History

CDFA's GF Vertebrate Pest Program was in place from the early 1920's until the 1980's. During that time, CDFA maintained a network of trappers that handled rodent as well as predatory animal control throughout the state.

Nutria were farmed for their pelts in the early 1900's and were meant to be contained and monitored through a permit system. In 1948, a Nutria escape occurred in Stanislaus County. Approximately 300 escaped animals were removed from 20 counties throughout California, with the last animal being removed in 1965. The animals were eradicated through a cooperative effort between CDFA, CDFW, the County Agricultural Commissioners (CAC) and the USDA-WS. These animals were believed to have all been escapees from fur farming operations. In 1959 the issuance of Nutria farming permits was transferred from CDFW to CDFA, and at that time there were 324 permitted Nutria farms in the state. By 1970, there were only three permits issued and none have been issued since. Eradication was declared in 1978. California Fish and Game Code Division 3, Chapter 2 and the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Section 671 prohibit the importation of Nutria and other live restricted animals.

C. State Level Considerations

The CDFA mission is "to serve the citizens of California by promoting and protecting a safe, healthy food supply, and enhancing local and global agricultural trade, through efficient management, innovation, and sound science, with a commitment to environmental stewardship." Pest prevention is uniquely positioned to protect California's urban and natural environments as well as its agriculture. CDFA is committed to protecting the environment, economy and citizenry from invasive pests. The FAC provides CDFA with the authority to protect California from the damage caused by the introduction or spread of harmful pests.

D. Justification

According to CDFA's Pest Ratings Policy and Definitions, Nutria is an 'A' rated pest and as such, CDFA is required to take steps to mitigate its spread. Detecting and delimiting the distribution of Nutria will assist CDFW in eradicating and preventing the movement of Nutria into new areas of the state. Currently, Nutria have been detected in the Merced and San Joaquin river systems. Animals have been confirmed in Fresno, Merced, Stanislaus and Tuolumne counties. To date, less than 30 animals have been removed from the field with many of these sightings being lone animals or small family groups. The animals are currently as close as 10 miles upstream from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. The natural riparian woodland habitat along the rivers where they are currently found is not prime habitat but once they reach the Delta, with its extensive emergent marsh and agricultural fields, their population will explode. The corn, row crops and orchards in the Delta agricultural area as well as the system of levees protecting these agricultural lands, are particularly susceptible to Nutria damage.

California's moderate climate and expansive natural waterways make an ideal environment for the establishment of Nutria. Nutria is a serious agricultural pest that has the potential to cause damage to row crops, rice, fruit and nut orchards and vineyards, lowering crop yield and causing losses. This rodent pest is also disruptive to water delivery systems and can become a primary cause of food safety issues by spreading contaminants through irrigation systems. If Nutria were to become established

within the state, there would be vast environmental and economic damage to California's $54 billion agriculture industry, along with an increase in funding needed for generalized control of the rodent population.

According to an October 2010 factsheet from Louisiana Wildlife Services, Nutria caused significant direct losses to rice by burrowing into the ground. Nutria are notorious in Louisiana and Texas for undermining and breeching water-retention levees in flooded fields used to produce rice and crawfish. Along with burrowing, Nutria graze on rice plants which can significantly reduce yields, with severe localized loss.

In Willamette Valley, Oregon, which has a similar climate/cropping system to northern California, reportable damage has been found in alfalfa, grass seed, wheat, barley, oats, field corn, carrots, table beets, cauliflower, cucumbers, melons, sugar beets as well as girdling damage to fruit/nut, ornamental and riparian trees.

Nutria also can impact public health and safety. The rodents can serve as a vector for several human and livestock diseases and parasites, such as tularemia, leptospirosis, liver flukes and tapeworms, and given their habitat, may contaminate water accessed by people, animals and livestock.

Under the direction of the Environmental Scientist, the seasonal crews made up of two part-time Agricultural Technician II's and three part-time Agricultural Technician I's, will conduct survey detection work throughout the southern Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Utilizing boats and four-wheel drive vehicles, the survey crews will blanket the region with motion triggered trail cameras in areas conducive to Nutria. These camera trapping locations will be baited with Nutria attractant scents as well as food items such as sweet potatoes. The cameras will be checked on a two-week interval with the memory cards being pulled and reviewed for any sign of Nutria. In addition to the cameras, staff will perform visual surveys for any signs of Nutria or their damage when moving from site to site. CDFA staff will coordinate with CDFW and USDA-WS staff who will be carrying out the trapping and removal of any animals detected. At this time, funding is requested on a two-year limited-term basis, given the uncertainty of the ongoing need and level of resources required to eradicate Nutria. This will allow for resources to be re-evaluated as more information becomes available.

E. Outcomes and Accountability

Oversight of the program is provided by the Environmental Program Manager II within CDFA's Integrated Pest Control Branch. This program operates under a current Incident Command System with CDFW. Local CAC's offices also share oversight of the program as primary stakeholders and contributors. Program staff produce monthly and annual reports detailing: the areas of waterways surveyed, positive or negative Nutria findings and the locations where detections have occurred.

CDFW's eradication project success is measured by the decline in Nutria populations. Benefits are measured by the lack of economic impact from Nutria on California communities, which would include crop losses and property damage as well as the safety and availability of agricultural irrigation canals, drinking water, recreational sites and waterfront communities.

The success of CDFA outreach is shown when the program is sent referrals of any Nutria sightings in the area. The following workload measures and projected outcomes will continue to be used to evaluate the success of the current survey and eradication program:

Projected Outcomes

Workload Measure	2018-19	2019-20
Detection Surveys	**2,400**	**2,400**
Expanded Surveys	**600**	**400**
Post eradication monitoring	**0**	**10**
Education/Outreach	**12**	**12**

F. Analysis of All Feasible Alternatives

Alternative # 1: Approve $400,000 GF on a two-year limited-term basis beginning in 2018-19 and 1 permanent position to assist CDFW and USDA-WS with the efforts to suppress Nutria.

Advantage: Funding this proposal avoids the environmental and economic damage that would be caused by the establishment of Nutria in the state, and is much more cost effective than generalized control of Nutria across the state. The funding will enable CDFA to provide the survey information necessary for CDFW to conduct a successful Nutria eradication project. The proximity of the current detections to the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta makes the timely eradication of Nutria very important. If Nutria were to establish in the Delta, it would be disastrous to agriculture, water purveyance and the natural environment. This alternative allows resource needs to be re-evaluated as more information becomes available.

Disadvantage: This alternative increases the obligation to the GF.

Alternative # 2: Do not approve $400,000 GF in 2018-19 and 2019-20 and 1 permanent position to assist the CDFW and USDA-WS with the efforts to suppress Nutria.

Advantage: There would be no obligation to the GF.

Disadvantage: CDFA would be unable to assist CDFW in the current Nutria eradication project. Nutria will likely spread and become widely established in California. This would lead to widespread environmental damage, increased economic impacts to agricultural, recreational and drinking water, increased control costs, increased threat of contamination to water systems, damage to water infrastructure and disruption of water deliveries.

Alternative # 3: Pursue funding from industry stakeholders or other agencies.

Advantage: There likely would be no obligation to the GF.

Disadvantage: Funding from other agencies or industry stakeholders is at the discretion of the agency or industry and therefore not secure. If funds are removed unexpectedly, it can collapse the program, likely leading to the expansion and increased populations of Nutria. Many crops grown in California are known hosts for several exotic pests; therefore, it is impossible to equitably assess each specific industry fee. These rodents will attack and impact landscaped areas, structures, natural environments, native species, and economically-important crops and can have an adverse impact on public health and safety.

G. Implementation Plan

Beginning July 2018, CDFA will do the following:

- Recruit and hire an Environmental Scientist
- Recruit and hire seasonal survey team
- Develop and implement survey protocol
- Map positive and negative survey locations
- Develop and implement outreach program

H. Supplemental Information

CDFA would need to purchase two 16-foot V-hulled side console boats for the survey. These lightweight vessels are easily towed by standard light duty trucks and are capable of being launched and retrieved from improvised boat ramps. The shallow draft allows these small boats to access shallow water in the river systems that Nutria have currently been detected. The windshield, shade and high sides allow these smaller craft to safely be utilized in larger waterways as encountered in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta deep water channel. The CDFA will also need to purchase two vehicles to tow these boats.

I. Recommendation

CDFA recommends approval of Alternative #1, increase of $400,000 in GF in 2018-19 and 2019-20 and 1 permanent position to assist CDFW and USDA-WS with the efforts to eradicate Nutria. Nutria is a devastating rodent that causes damage to agriculture, water purveyance and the natural environment by damaging habitats and out-competing native species. It also vectors human pathogens. Providing CDFA the ability to survey and document the distribution of Nutria will aid the eradication effort by directing CDFW where to focus their activities.